



# NEW DIRECTIONS:

*a STRATEGIC PLAN for*

## PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

2009-2014

# **NEW DIRECTIONS:**

## **A Strategic Plan for Piedmont Technical College, 2009-2014**

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# 1.

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of strategic planning cannot be overstated. Without a strong, well-communicated plan, an organization can lose focus. Not only is the plan important, but the planning process is also critical. Effective planning results in the adoption of a compelling vision that inspires stakeholders and in the identification of strategies that drive the organization toward its mission and vision. The following quote by Dr. John Sheerer provides a succinct description of the power of planning:

*"The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created—created first in the mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination."*

The Area Commission, administration, faculty, and staff of Piedmont Technical College join me in presenting an exciting new planning initiative—***New Directions: A Strategic Plan for Piedmont Technical College, 2009-2014.***

The *New Directions Strategic Plan* is a declaration of our shared commitment to create vibrant learning communities through the relentless pursuit of student success and economic prosperity for all stakeholders and of our firm intention to transform Piedmont Technical College into a premier institution. Central to the plan is a goal to strengthen ties with students, clients, partners, and communities in order to achieve premier community college status in the state, region, and nation.

The plan's implementation will ultimately transform the way that Piedmont Technical College does business and dramatically change institutional and public perspectives. As College units put the new plan in motion, employees will apply continuous quality improvement concepts, strategically building and re-engineering solutions to improve processes and services for students and clients. By challenging traditional methods and adapting more flexible, client-centered processes, we will strengthen the competitive position of the College, its graduates, and our communities.

I would like to express deep appreciation to all who contributed to the development of this plan. The project would not have been possible without the involvement of a large number of students, faculty, staff, board members, and business and community leaders from the seven counties that the College serves. Thank you for sharing your expertise, interest, and vision.



**L. Ray Brooks, Ed.D.**  
President  
Piedmont Technical College

## 2.

### **PLANNING PURPOSE**

The *New Directions Strategic Plan* provides a guide for realizing PTC's vision and mission through initiatives that competitively position the College, its students, and its clients to be successful. The plan serves as a collaborative framework for data-driven decision-making that involves prioritization, resource allocation, implementation and assessment.

## 3.

### **VISION, MISSION, MISSION GOALS, AND VALUES**

#### **VISION**

We will become a premier community college with a shared commitment to create vibrant learning communities through relentless pursuit of student success and economic prosperity for all stakeholders.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL MISSION**

Piedmont Technical College transforms lives and strengthens communities by providing opportunities for intellectual and economic growth.

The College, a member of the South Carolina Technical College and Comprehensive Education System, is a public comprehensive two-year post-secondary institution. Piedmont Technical College contributes to the economic growth and development of the largest and most diverse region of the technical college system, Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties and to the state. The College enrolls approximately 4,500 to 5,500 credit students. The college responds to the academic, training and public service needs of the community through excellence in teaching and educational services. Piedmont Technical College's open admissions policy provides accessibility for individuals with diverse backgrounds the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills for employment in engineering technology, industrial technology, agriculture, business, health, and public service. Piedmont Technical College graduates develop competencies in written and oral communication, mathematics, problem solving and application of technology.

The college offers university transfer; associate degrees, diplomas and certificates in technical and occupational areas; developmental education programs; student development programs providing academic, career and individual support; and custom-designed Continuing Education programs provide training for business and industry

## MISSION GOALS

Piedmont Technical College fulfills its mission through a comprehensive planning process focused on annual operational plans in support of the following mission goals:

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|--|---|
| I. Promote excellence in teaching, learning, and educational services to ensure that each student has the opportunity to attain his or her fullest potential.  | differences and encourages open communication.  |
| II. Offer quality credit courses and programs leading to associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates in career and technical fields; university transfer; and developmental education; to meet the emerging needs of the communities served. | VI. Exercise efficient and responsible stewardship of the College's human, financial, and physical resources to ensure sustainability.  |
| III. Promote community and workforce development and economic growth through new and existing partnerships with business, industry, government, community agencies, and educational institutions   | VII. Use data and assessment results to make well-informed decisions regarding the continuous improvement of our programs and services. |
| IV. Provide effective enrollment management systems and student support services to ensure optimal access, enrollment, retention, program completion and student success.  | VIII. Integrate appropriate technology throughout instructional, administrative, and operational services.                              |
| V. Foster a cooperative and healthy environment that enhances the awareness, understanding and celebration of  | IX. Ensure public awareness and recognition of the value of the College through public relations activities.                            |
|  | X. Provide a safe and accessible learning and working environment.  |
|  | XI. Develop and support professional development opportunities for all employees.   |

## SHARED VALUES

The College is guided by the practice of the following core values:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Leadership and Innovation                   | • Entrepreneurship and Workforce Development  |
| • Integrity, Accountability, and Transparency | • Lifelong Learning and Community Improvement |
| • Collaboration and Collegiality              | • Data-driven Decision Making                 |
| • Inclusivity, Diversity, and Accessibility   | • The Ongoing Pursuit of Excellence           |
| • Student Success and Customer Service        | • Commitment to Lean Principles               |

# 4.

## KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Implementation of the *New Directions Strategic Plan* will substantially impact the College and its varied stakeholders. As the focus moves from strategic to operational, projects will rely on the presence of the following Key Success Factors to meet our mission:

- 1. College-Wide Support and Ownership:**  
To maximize the success of the strategic planning process, employees must understand and support the vision and goals of the College, the personal impact of the plan, and how the plan's implementation will change their work.
- 2. Communication:** Clear, frequent and ongoing communication will be critical to the acceptance and implementation of the plan. Communication must help individuals understand what the plan means and how it impacts their personal role and interactions with the College.
- 3. Culture Change:** Implementation of the plan will affect the way the College teaches, learns, and "does business." Employees must embrace a new culture, challenge outdated processes, and come together to actively support change.
- 4. Appropriate Staffing:** It is critical that the College recognizes and responds to the need for appropriate staffing to implement, leverage and support solutions.
- 5. Professional Development:** As the College implements change, individuals and teams will grow and develop with it. Consequently, professional development is critical for all employees.
- 6. Financial Support for Infrastructure:** Piedmont Technical College will provide adequate funding for infrastructure.
- 7. Integration and Revision:** The plan's value will be realized when it is thoroughly integrated into College processes. The plan will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis to assure continual alignment with the College's mission goals.
- 8. Visionary Leadership:** The success of this plan is highly dependent upon the actions of College leaders. To inspire others, leaders must demonstrate passion and determination for student success while nurturing a receptive, cooperative, communicative and transparent workplace.

# 5.

## SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

**A. Transforming Lives:** Everything we do is driven by our commitment to the success of our students. (Mission Goals: I, II, III, IV, V, VI)

- A.1 We will be the college of choice for a wider range of students.
- A.2 We will meet students where they are and take them where they want to be regardless of previous educational preparation, socio-economic status, race or gender.
- A.3 We will increase the percentage of students completing degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
- A.4 We will offer educational programs and services that are responsive, flexible and of the highest quality.
- A.5 We will expand course and program delivery through various regional sites, modality methods, partnerships and alliances.

**B. Ongoing Pursuit of Excellence:** We will only achieve excellence through the growth, development, and nurturing of our most valuable resource, our people. (Mission Goals: I, IV, V, XI)

- B.1 We will recruit and retain exceptional faculty and staff that reflect the global environment in which we live.
- B.2 We will establish a culture of trust and respect through open communication.
- B.3 We will provide a comprehensive professional development program.
- B.4 We will recognize and reward performance based on vision, mission, and values.

**C. Culture of Continuous Improvement:** We will embrace a culture of data driven decision making to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and services and use the results for continuous improvement. (Mission Goal: I, IV, VII)

- C.1 We will implement strategies to measure outcomes and analyze results to improve the college's effectiveness and excellence.
- C.2 We will engage in strategic and operational planning to build a culture of continuous improvement.

**D. Strengthening Communities:** We will be the preeminent catalyst for workforce and economic development in our service region and the state. (Mission Goals: I, III)

- D.1 We will proactively engage in community development throughout the region through partnerships, coalitions, strategic alliances.
- D.2 We will be proactive and responsive to the needs of business and industry.

**E. Communicating our Mission:** We will establish a strong brand identity to ensure widespread recognition of our role in and value to the communities we serve. (Mission Goals II, III, V, IX)

- E.1 We will develop a consistent and high-quality brand image.
- E.2 We will effectively communicate the College's values to all its constituencies.

**F. Ensuring Sustainability and Growth:** We will enhance existing revenue streams and identify new sources of funding to expand and improve the College's services. (Mission Goal: V, VIII, X, VI)

- F.1 We will position the college to maximize all funding sources.
- F.2 We will advance the institution through comprehensive and successful grant writing that is aligned with the overall strategic plan.
- F.3 We will ensure campus facilities are modern, safe and environmentally efficient.

# 6.

## 2009 – 2014 STRATEGIC PLAN

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION A – TRANSFORMING LIVES:

Everything we do is driven by our commitment to the success of our students.

*Strategic Objective A.1* – We will be the college of choice for a wider range of students.

#### **Strategies:**

A.1.1 – Enhance the quality of collegiate campus life through the improvement of student facilities, services, and programming.

A.1.2 – Implement predictive student recruitment, admissions, and registration tracking systems from inquiry-to-prospect-to-applicant-to-student.

A.1.3 – Transform all intake processes to be responsive to the students regardless of time, location, and method.

A.1.4 – Expand opportunities for high school students to enroll in college courses through expanded dual enrollment and Middle College initiatives.

*Strategic Objective A.2* – We will meet students where they are and take them where they want to be regardless of previous educational preparation, socio-economic status, race or gender.

#### **Strategies:**

A.2.1 – Create and sustain a nurturing environment that results in student success.

A.2.2 – Improve advising, counseling, and mentoring in order to enhance student success in career and life planning.

A.2.3 – Provide a customer-centered outreach and admissions process that meets or exceeds expectations of prospective students and applicants.

A.2.4 – Develop a centralized information center with trained telephone and online personnel.

A.2.5 – Ensure the effectiveness of developmental studies courses.

*Strategic Objective A.3* – We will increase the percentage of students completing degrees, diplomas, and certificates.

#### **Strategies:**

A.3.1 – Create a safe and healthy campus culture that is responsive to daily life issues of students.

A.3.2 – Increase understanding among applicants, students, and employees of the importance of Financial Aid in the success and retention of students.

A.3.3 – Develop information, service, and support systems that are integrated, meet student expectations, and are available online.

A.3.4 – Develop a comprehensive student retention program.



A.3.5 – Ensure student learning at every level through technology-readiness assessment.

*Strategic Objective A.4* - We will offer educational programs and services that are responsive, flexible and of the highest quality.

**Strategies:**

A.4.1 - Research and identify potential programs and areas of interest.

A.4.2 – Align curriculum to regional and global employment needs.

A.4.3 – Expand and increase the effectiveness of Advisory Boards.

A.4.4 – Integrate multi-cultural awareness into curriculum and program content.

A.4.5 – Embrace the principles of a learning college model.

*Strategic Objective A.5* – We will expand course and program delivery through various regional sites, modality methods, partnerships and alliances.

**Strategies:**

A.5.1 – Accommodate students’ changing lifestyles and schedules by developing alternative instructional strategies.

A.5.2 – Identify needs and implement academic programs for each county center.

A.5.3 – Expand instructional resources to all county centers and online students.

A. 5.4 – Promote and expand articulation, bridge, and transfer agreements.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION B – ONGOING PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE:**

We will only achieve excellence through the growth, development, and nurturing of our most valuable resource, our people.

*Strategic Objective B.1* - We will recruit and retain exceptional faculty and staff that reflect the global environment in which we live.

**Strategies:**

B.1.1 – Ensure faculty and staff reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

B.1.2 – Ensure all present and future employees of the college have a thorough understanding of the College’s vision, mission, values, culture, and strategic plan.

B.1.3– Recruit and hire faculty and staff that reflect the core values of the college.

*Strategic Objective B.2* - We will establish a culture of trust and respect through open communication.

**Strategies:**

B.2.1 – Develop a system for regular input from all facets of the college and community stakeholders, providing transparency in decision making processes and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the communications system.

B.2.2 – Set priorities and implement appropriate plans based on input from all stakeholders.

*Strategic Objective B.3 - We will provide a comprehensive professional development program.*

**Strategies:**

B.3.1 – Provide opportunities for faculty and staff development that enable the college to achieve the goals outlined in the strategic plan.

B.3.2 – Determine the extent to which faculty development programs achieve the desired results and use this evaluation to improve and refine future staff and faculty development programs.

B.3.3 – Establish a professional development plan for all employees and incorporate it into the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS).

*Strategic Objective B.4 - We will recognize and reward performance based on our vision, mission, and values.*

**Strategies:**

B.4.1 – Develop and implement a reward and recognition system.

B.4.2 – Research, benchmark, and implement personnel compensation at an equitable pay scale.

B.4.3 – Transform the current Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) into a living management tool used for positive outcomes and personal and professional development.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION C – CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:**

We will embrace a culture of data driven decision making to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and services and use the results for continuous improvement.

*Strategic Objective C.1 - We will implement strategies to measure outcomes and analyze results to improve the College's effectiveness and excellence.*

**Strategies:**

C.1.1 – Design and implement a systematic process to evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs, student learning outcomes and administrative units.

C.1.2 – Identify critical desired outcomes within each unit, department and division.

C.1.3 – Implement performance metrics, benchmarks and goals, and automate the tracking and reporting of metric outcomes.

C.1.4 – Utilize cross-functional teams to identify and evaluate internal and external data trends for decision making.

*Strategic Objective C.2 - We will engage in strategic and operational planning to build a culture of continuous improvement.*

**Strategies:**

C.2.1 – Transform the strategic plan into departmental operational plans.

C.2.2 – Establish a culture for employees to strategically think, plan, manage and operationally produce strategic results.

C.2.3 – Implement LEAN principles.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION D – STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES:**

We will be the preeminent catalyst for workforce and economic development in our service region and the state.

*Strategic Objective D.1* - We will proactively engage in community development throughout the region through partnerships, coalitions, and strategic alliances.

### **Strategies:**

D.1.1 – Create the capacity for each county to develop and grow.

D.1.2 – We will increase our visibility in our communities by encouraging involvement at all levels throughout the institution.

D.1.3 – Aggressively market continuing education and economic development services throughout the service region.

*Strategic Objective D.2* – We will be proactive and responsive to the needs of business and industry.

### **Strategies:**

D.2.1 – Collaborate with local economic developers and chambers of commerce to conduct a needs assessment.

D.2.2 – Develop a comprehensive training plan specific to each county.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION E – COMMUNICATING OUR MISSION:**

We will establish a strong brand identity to ensure widespread recognition of our role and value to the communities we serve.

*Strategic Objective E.1* - We will develop a consistent and high-quality brand image.

### **Strategies:**

E.1.1 – Assess the image the college projects and how this image is communicated both internally and externally.

E.1.2 – Develop a brand identity system based on synthesis of the college’s desired image and the communities’ perceptions.

E.1.3 – Evaluate current communication, promotional efforts and college events for quality and consistency.

E.1.4 – Ensure employees present a professional image.

*Strategic Objective E.2* - We will effectively communicate the College’s value to all of its constituencies.

### **Strategies:**

E.2.1 – Develop a comprehensive internal communication system.

E.2.2 – Develop a comprehensive marketing and public relations plan that communicates the mission, vision and values of the college.

E.2.3 - Identify and pursue key market segments based on the College’s strategic institutional directions.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION F – ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH:**

We will enhance existing revenue streams and identify new sources of funding to expand and improve the College's services.

*Strategic Objective F.1 - We will position the college to maximize all funding sources.*

### **Strategies:**

F.1.1 – Build relationships with local, state and Federal agencies and donor prospects to result in increased financial support.

F.1.2 – Align budget priorities with the College's strategic plan.

F. 1.3 – Align the Foundation's strategic plan with the college's strategic plan.

*Strategic Objective F.2 - We will advance the institution through comprehensive and successful grant writing that is aligned with the overall strategic plan.*

### **Strategies:**

F.2.1 – Significantly increase competitive grant funding.

F.2.2 – Secure a Title III Strengthening Institutions grant.

F.2.3 – Develop and implement a grants process to enhance communication between academic affairs, finance, and the grants office.

*Strategic Objective F.3 - We will ensure campus facilities are modern, safe and environmentally efficient.*

### **Strategies:**

F.3.1 – Establish a comprehensive risk management program.

F.3.2 – Enhance the college's comprehensive emergency and disaster plan.

F.3.3 – Develop, publicize, and implement a comprehensive college facilities master plan.

F.3.4 – Construct a Health Science building and relocate and or expand existing programs and implement new programs and services.

# 7.

## DESIRED RESULTS

The future state of Piedmont Technical College as envisioned by stakeholders after successful completion of the strategic plan would include the following:

1. Piedmont Technical College is a fully accredited institution of higher education with an advanced credentialed workforce.
2. Piedmont Technical College competes in the education marketplace by providing relevant, attractive and engaging learning opportunities that match student interests, talents and abilities.
3. All students demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful.
4. College employees practice accepted professional ethics at all times.
5. Employees are vision-driven, competent, and committed to professional growth.
6. Cultural, recreational and social activities enhance the quality of the educational experience and collegiate life.
7. College grounds and facilities contribute to a friendly, inviting and attractive environment that anticipates the needs of students, employees and visitors.
8. Students and alumni are engaged, proactive citizens who lead and serve their communities and contribute to the overall social and cultural quality of life.
9. Piedmont Technical College develops relationships and partnerships with communities that expand and support the College's influence and resources.

# 8.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

### ABOUT THE PROCESS

Piedmont Technical College followed a thorough and engaging process to develop its strategic plan. All college stakeholders were given an opportunity to participate in our planning process through survey instruments, internal and external focus group meetings, and e-mail opportunities through the college's website.

## THE PLANNING COUNCIL

The Planning Council consists of approximately thirty members who represent a cross section of College departments. Some members are appointed for a specific term while others serve by virtue of their job responsibilities. One member represents the Area Commission.

While the Planning Council was largely responsible for the development of the plan, the group relied heavily on information gathered by environmental analysis committees and on input from stakeholders within the College and in the communities that Piedmont Technical College serves.

## STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

To successfully implement the strategic plan, the following developments must take place:

- **Create understanding, ownership, and leadership of the vision** – The Piedmont Technical College community must understand and support the plan. A host of communication efforts will be launched to obtain feedback, build understanding and support, and empower leaders.
- **Develop operational plans** – The strategic plan must guide the development of operational plans, assuring that projects align with the vision, strategic initiatives and prioritization criteria.
- **Create performance measurements and a review process** – Measurements must be developed to assess the success of planning components. A review process must be initiated to update the plan based on these measurements as well as on the changing needs and goals of the College.

# 9.

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

### COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

During the planning process, students, employees and community leaders participated in focus groups, surveys and community meetings. The following priorities were drawn from their input:

#### **Area Commission Priorities**

- Strong bridge between high school and a four-year degree and/or a rewarding career
- Innovative leadership in the revitalization of local communities
- Quality collegiate experience that includes recreation, social and leadership activities
- Positioning and branding of the College as the *First Choice* for higher education
- New programs that lead to opportunities in high-demand, high-paying careers
- Strong, visionary leadership for change and fiscal soundness
- An inclusive culture for constituents of all ages

#### **Community Priorities**

- Visionary leadership and innovative methods for revitalization of communities

- Stronger community presence that includes a variety of program options
- Services that generate small business success and entrepreneurial development
- Partnerships with all educational organizations that result in many options for success
- Marketing and communication to all about opportunities and services provided
- Assistance in promoting intercultural diversity within the communities
- Engage community leaders in improving local community and economic development.

#### ***Student Priorities***

- Flexible class schedules that provide viable options for working students
- Support services available at times that are convenient for students on non-traditional schedules
- Access to more social, recreational and collegiate experiences
- Adequate and accessible parking, food service, counseling, financial aid and business office services for students on both traditional and non-traditional schedules
- Adequate security during non-traditional class times
- Additional financial aid and emergency aid opportunities
- Quality programs and instructors who prepare students for real high-paying, high-demand jobs
- Ability to transfer to other colleges or universities without loss of credit or time

#### ***Staff and Faculty Priorities***

- Added value for students and communities
- Proactive delivery of leading-edge, quality education and services
- Provide students with their best opportunity for positive change
- Nurturing, engaging environment in which students and employees feel valued, important and successful
- High levels of professionalism, quality and competence and fiscal sustainability

### **STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS**

The College identified and considered the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats during the planning process:

#### ***Strengths***

- Leadership, employees and Area Commission members who are committed to re-focusing the College to meet the challenges of a global society and economy
- Facilities and access points located throughout the service area
- Broad-based community support
- Cooperative and collaborative partnerships with other education providers
- Reputation for service to industry
- Strong industrial and business base
- Sustaining student enrollment

#### ***Weaknesses***

- Lack of financial stability in a declining economy
- Underdeveloped ability to be nimble and responsive
- Limited success in providing market-driven courses, programs and services when, where, and how students and customers desire them
- Need to upgrade infrastructure at all locations in order to accommodate expanding use

- Aging format for the delivery of distance learning
- Underutilization of data to form critical outcomes, performance measures and standards
- Limited access to dashboards for data collection, reporting and decision making
- Inadequate funding for the framework needed to facilitate data-driven decision making
- Wide disparity in the technology-related skills of students, faculty and staff
- Inconsistent technology training that offers few incentives for employee participation

### **Opportunities**

- To refocus local priorities in response to global social and economic developments
- To identify, plan and implement “out of the box” solutions for challenges facing students, business, industry, citizens and communities and employees
- To build and sustain a culture of quality throughout the College
- To increase efficiency and effectiveness by re-engineering processes and engaging in continuous quality improvement
- To develop a systemic plan to deal with the total cost of operations
- To become more student-centered and customer-centered

### **Threats**

- Many employees who are nearing retirement
- Short supply of trained and credentialed technical support personnel
- Short-term budget cuts and long-term erosion of state funding
- Lack of adequate and sustained funding from counties for the operation of local centers
- Unemployment levels and potential for reduction in manufacturing and other business sectors
- Global competition for local business and industries
- Shortage of financial aid and emergency aid for prospective and current students
- Rapidly changing technology
- Technophobia and resistance to change on the part of some employees and students limit the College’s ability to systemically incorporate technology
- Insufficient release time for employees to participate in professional development activities and to practice and implement new skills

# 10.

## **CLOSING**

The ***New Directions Strategic Plan*** is a declaration of our shared commitment to create vibrant learning communities through the relentless pursuit of student success and economic prosperity for all stakeholders and of our firm intention to transform Piedmont Technical College into a premier institution. Central to the plan is a goal to strengthen ties with students, clients, partners, and communities in order to achieve premier community college status in the state, region, and nation.